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# Impartial Account

Of all the

## Material Circumstances

Relating to

### Sir Thomas Armstrong, K<sup>t</sup>

*Who was Executed at Tyburn for High Treason, on Friday the 20th of June, 1684. From the first discovery of the Plot, to the day of his Execution. As his being Impeached of High Treason, for conspiring the Death of the King, &c. His Flight, and his Majesties Proclamation issued out thereupon, for his Apprehending. His continuance in Holland. The Indictment of High Treason against him, and Process of Outlawry entered thereon. His being Apprehended at Leyden in Holland, and brought into England.*

*His commitment to Newgate, and the Award of Death against him at the Kings-Bench-Bar at Westminster. The manner of his Behaviour till the Day of his Execution. Together with his last Dying Words at the place of Execution, &c.*

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Entered according to Order.

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Re-printed at Edinburgh, by the Heir of Andrew Anderson, Printer  
to His most Sacred Majesty, 1684.

March 1910

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Re-printed at Edinburgh, by the H. in 1804.

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*An Impartial Account of all the Circumstances  
Relating to Sir Thomas Armstrong Knight,  
who was Executed at Tyburn for High-Treason, on Friday the  
20. of June, 1684.*

**A**fter divers *Heats and Feuds*, and many close and under-hand *Contrivances* in June, or about the beginning of July, 1683. one Mr. *Keeling* came in and made Oath that divers disaffected Persons had a Design upon the Lives of his most Sacred Majesty, and his Royal Brother, and the Established Government to Subvert, by Raising Insurrection, and Leavying War and Rebellion, Impeaching many of them by Name, and mentioning the place and preparations, and the reason of the Defeat in the Enterprize, viz. The Fire at *New-Market*, which caused his Majesty and his Royal Highness, to depart sooner then was expected, &c. whereupon divers were apprehended, some came in and Confirmed Mr. *Keelings* Testimony, and others fled; amongst the latter of which, was Sir *Thomas Armstrong*, who thereupon was proclaimed a Traitor, and a Reward of 500. pound offered to any that could bring him to Justice, strictly commanding him to surrender himself into the hands of the publick Magistrate, which he refusing to do, had a Bill of High-Treason, soon after found against him by the *Grand Jury* for the City of *London*. Whereupon, after proclamation according to Law, being made in Court, and he not yet appearing to answer the King, Process of Outlawry was made out against him, and entered up in *Michaelmas-Term* last, whereby he stood attainted of High-Treason; yet was he not heard of for many Months after though it was conjectured he was in *Holland*, or in some of the *Flower Towns*; but in the end Notice was gi-



ven to the Honourable *Thomas Chidly* Esq; his Majesties *Envoy Extraordinary* to the States of *Holland*, that he and divers others who had been Impeached as Conspirators against the life of his Majesty, and against whom it did openly appear upon the Tryals of some who had suffered, that they had held many Consults, and carryed on the designed Rebellion, and particularly against *Sir Thomas*, it appeared that he did go to view the Kings Guards in order to their being surprized, and gave his opinion it was feizable) were in the Town of *Lejden* ( the very place where *Sir Thomas* was born) and shewed themselves publickly; whereupon by vertue of a Treaty made between his Majesty and the States, he obtained leave to Apprehend him, whereupon sending his Steward and Secretary to the Head Ballew, who acts therein the Nature of an under Sheriff, he with his Officers went readily with them, and entered the Room where *Sir Thomas Armstrong* and divers others were very merry, but upon the sudden, and unexpected approach of the Officers were somewhat consternated, when as one of the Gentlemen catching *Sir Thomas* by the middle, told him he must go for *England* with him: *Nay*, says he, *I will not, I'll see you hanged first*, to which the Gentleman replied, he should go, and he doubted not but to see or hear of his being hanged before he returned.

Whereupon he made some oppositions, but being over-powr'd by the Officers (and his company making their Escapes) he was carried on Ship-board, and waisted over, when being Landed at *Tower-Wharf*, and soon after conveyed to *Newgate*, upon a Warrant of Commitment signed by the Right Honourable *Sidny Godolphin* Esq; one of the principal Secretaries of State, he continued from the 11th of *Jan* to the 14th of the same Instant in the Prison aforesaid, and then in the morning of that day brought to the Bar of the Court of *Kings-Bench Westminster*, where Mr. *Attorney General* moved on the behalf of the King; that seeing *Sir Thomas Armstrong* the Prisoner at the Bar, stood attainted of *High-Treason* by Outlawry, for Conspiring the Death of the King, and to Levy War and

and Rebellion, &c. Execution might be awarded against him according to Law, and a day appointed by the Court, &c. Upon which motion, the Copy of his Commitment was Read, and thereupon being Ordered to hold up his hand, the Clark of the Crown demanded what he could say for himself, (seeing that upon an Indictment of *High-Treason* found in London, Process of Outlawry had been Issued out and Entered up, by vertue of which he stood attainted of the *High-Treason*, specified in the said Indictment) why the Court should not award Execution against him according to Law? whereto he Replyed, that he was beyond the Seas, and had no notice of the prosecution; further alledging that he was present within a twelvemonth and a day, specified by Act of Parliament, in case of surrender; and that thereupon he desired the Outlawry might be set aside, and he permitted to make his Defence upon Tryal, but was told that he was not Comprehended within the words of the Statute, for that he was brought thither by Compulsion, and did not surrender himself into the hands of the Magistrate, nor did it appear he was at all inclinable so to do: Then he desired the Statute might be Read, and that he might have Council assigned him to argue the point, the former of which was granted, but the words of the Statute appearing quite contrary to his Case, and the latter request over-ruled, as not allowable to a Person under his Circumstances: he then instanced the case of one under the same Circumstance, meaning as 'tis supposed Mr. *Hollomay*, who had the offer of a New Tryal by Mr. *Attorney General*, to which the Court returned Answer, that it was the Kings Pleasure and Mercy, and that his Majesty knew how, and when best to dispose of it, and that if it was his Pleasure so to Order in the Present, God forbid but he should have the Benefit of it, or if it was his Majesties Pleasure to Pardon Sir *Thomas Armstrong*, the Court would acquiesce therein, but no such Mercy or Indulgence appearing, it was a Duty incumbent upon the Court to award Execution against him, &c.



The proceedings having been thus far, the Keeper of *Newgate* was asked what days were usual for Execution, who replied *Wednesdays* and *Fridays* were commonly the days in such cases; whereupon the Court ordered his Execution on the ensuing *Friday*, which is the 30. Instant, saying that a Rule of Court should be sent, and what else the Law in that case Required, upon which the Prisoner desired further to be heard, and that he might be dealt with according to Law, or have the benefit of it, &c. But urging nothing material to the present case, he was answered, that he should have the benefit of the Law, and thereupon the Keeper was ordered to see him Executed according to Law, or as the Law in that case Requires, then the Prisoner pretending Innocence, *Mr. Attorney-General* informed their Lordships that he had many plain and convincing Evidences against the Prisoner, and that it appeared he was so far from Relenting, that he had continued a correspondence by Letters, &c. In Relation to the carrying on the Design, which appeared by divers Papers found about him, upon his being Apprehended, and would have proceeded, but the Court told him the Law had its course, and that they could not take notice of any thing in that Nature, commanding the Keeper to take back his Prisoner, which was accordingly done, and he Re-conveyed to *Newgate* to expect his Dissolution; when retiring in private, and seriously Re-collecting himself, he seriously reflected upon his past spent Life, and the short time he had to continue in this World, appearing somewhat dejected, and often breathing forth short Ejaculations, confessing his Sins were many, desiring that God of his infinite Mercy would pardon him, and wash him in the Blood of his dear Son.

At his Request *Dr. Tenison* Minister of *St. Martins* in the Fields came to visit him, and Pray with him, giving him such saving Counsel and Spiritual Comfort, as to all appearance wrought effectually in preparing him for a state of Salvation, so that his temper was in a short time wonderfully changed: The said Doctor out of his

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his pious inclination, and ardent desire to deliver his Soul out of the snare of the Tempter, often visiting him during the Intervene.

The fatal day being come, he was (after having been visited by divers Friends and Relations) put into the Sledg, having on a Black suit, suitable to his Mournful condition, and Conducted by a strong Guard to Tyburn, the place of Execution, where arriving about eleven in the Morning, he stood a considerable time in the Sledg, and took leave of his Friends, &c. and then desired that Dr. Teneson might be called, which was done, and the Dr. as soon as he could get through the Crowd, (which was exceeding great,) came, then was Sir Thomas helped into the Cart, as also the Dr. who kneeling down, prayed fervently with him, desiring God to pardon his manifold sins, and give him a sence of his saving Grace, that so he might lay hold of his Mercies by Faith, and be washed in the Blood of Jesus Christ, &c. concluding with the Lords Prayer, and the Benediction of the Church of England, then both rising, Sir Thomas after a while kneeled again, and Prayed himself, desiring God to season this Affliction to him for the Salvation of his Soul. beseeching him not to lay his sins to his Charge, but forgive him the offences he had committed against him, and pardon his abusing the many mercies and opportunities of Grace he had bestowed upon him, and that he would bless these Nations, and send Unanimity amongst them, &c. Then rising again, he gave his Hatt and Wigg to his Gentleman, and then prayed again fervently, confessing that he had grievously sinned, and that justly for his sins he was come to an untimely End, yet hoped it might prove to the saving of his poor Immortal Soul, &c. When having been in the Cart for the space of half an hour, his Cap was put on, and the Rope thrown over the Beam and fastened, then his hands were tyed, he still putting up Ejaculations to Heaven, with these Sentences, viz. *Lord have mercy upon my Soul, Christ Jesus have mercy upon me, &c.* He passed from this Life to a state of Immortality, his lips trembling when he was cast from off the Cart.

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When he had hung about 20 or 30 minutes, he was cut down and Quartered, his Bowels burnt, as by Law in that case is required, and his Quarters brought back to Newgate, to be Disposed of at his Majesties pleasure.

~~waited in the blood of Jesus Christ, &c. concluding with the~~  
~~both rising, Sir Thomas as a while kneaded again, and prayed~~  
~~himself, desiring God to bestow a blessing upon the State~~  
~~tion of his Soul, beseeching him not to lay his Office to his Charge,~~  
~~but forgive him the offences he had committed against him, and~~  
~~pardon his abusing the many mercies and opportunities of Grace~~  
~~he had bestowed upon him, and that he would bless these Nations,~~  
~~and send them home in peace, and that he would again, the~~  
~~gave his Hat and Wig to his Convent, and that he paid again~~  
~~revertly, considering that he had given away his Hat, and that justly~~  
~~for himself he was come to an untimely End, yet loved it might~~  
~~prove to the saving of his poor Soul, or at least Soul, &c. When having~~  
~~been in the Court for the space of half an hour, his Coat was put on,~~  
~~and the Roper threw over the beam and ladder, that his hands~~  
~~were tied, he still putting up his petitions to Heaven, with these~~  
~~sentences, &c. Lord, I am a poor wretch, my Soul, O Lord, I beseech~~  
 ~~mercy upon me, &c. He passed from this life to a state of im-~~  
~~mortality, his spirit rising when he was cut down of the Court.~~  
~~When~~